

Appl. No. 10/068,535
Amdt. Dated August 18, 2005
Reply to Office action of June 21, 2005
Attorney Docket No. P15317-US1
EUS/JP/05-3189

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claim Amendments

The Applicant notes with appreciation the Examiner's renumbering of the wrongly numbered claims. The Applicant has amended claims 26-27, 29, 35 and 37 to more clearly state the claims to the Applicant's invention. Applicant respectfully submits no new matter has been added. Accordingly, claims 26-48 are pending in the application. Favorable reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a)

The Detailed Action argues the rejection of all claims, 26-48 for obviousness. However, only claims 30, 31 and 37 in the Detailed Action are formally rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stewart (US 6,759,960) in view of DeLorme et al (US 5,948,040). The Applicant's response will address all the claims (26-48) as indicated in the Claim Rejection portion of the Detailed Action. In response to the rejection of claims 26-48 for obviousness, the Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of these claims.

The Applicant's invention discloses a method and system for utilizing real-time information to automate and manage real-time reservation requests without a continuing need for active contact with the subscriber/customer. A business to business (B2B) engine coupled to a wireless network, maintains a database of commercial and individual subscribers along with associated profiles. The B2B engine receives a reservation inquiry from a subscriber to make a reservation, at for example a restaurant, but the subscriber doesn't know which restaurant. In real-time, the B2B engine determines the location of the subscriber and searches the database to find potential matches for the inquiry near the location of the subscriber; restaurant matches near the subscriber's current location are sent to the subscriber; the subscriber confirms a choice of restaurant with the B2B engine, which in turn utilizes a connected restaurant module to confirm a reservation with the restaurant; and the B2B engine automatically continues

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to update the reservation at the restaurant with estimated time of arrival according to the location of the subscriber, until the subscriber arrives at the restaurant.

The Applicant respectfully directs the Examiner's attention to amended independent claim 1.

26. (Previously Presented) A method for utilizing a business to business (B2B) engine and real-time information exchange to manage reservations, the B2B engine being coupled to a telecommunications network and the Internet, the method comprising the steps of:

obtaining membership agreements and profiles with subscribers and businesses for managing the reservations;

interconnecting the B2B engine with a business module, wherein the business module is in communication with a reservation application at a business member via the Internet;

receiving a real-time inquiry in the B2B engine from a subscriber member, the real-time inquiry activating a subscriber module coupled to the subscriber member's mobile telecommunications device and the B2B engine, the real-time inquiry initiating a reservation request;

responsive to the inquiry, the B2B engine, in real-time:

signaling a Mobile Positioning Center (MPC) connected to the telecommunications network to determine the current location of the mobile telecommunications device; and

at the same time querying the business module for information regarding the inquiry from the subscriber member;

sending a list of business members to the subscriber member's mobile telecommunications device, according to the requirements of the inquiry and the current location of the subscriber member;

receiving a confirmation of one of the business member choices from the subscriber member;

sending the confirmation via the Internet to the reservation application at the chosen business member; and

displaying and automatically updating the reservation information at the chosen business member until arrival of the subscriber member. (emphasis added)

The Applicant respectfully asserts that Stewart and Delorme individually or in combination do not disclose (directly or inherently) at least the following features present in Claim 26 (similar features can be found in independent Claim 37): 1) determining the subscriber's current location using a mobile positioning center while at the same time determining a list of businesses that match the subscriber's request that are near the location; 2) the subscriber's request includes identification of the subscriber

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member and all the method steps are accomplished in real time; and 3) the reservation is automatically updated (written to the business database) until the subscriber arrives at the business member.

The Stewart reference appears to disclose a system for providing location information of a mobile user/unit to a service provider that is connected to a mobile network. The mobile unit and an access point are equipped with transceivers to establish a mutual communication link. The mobile unit communicates with the Access Point to determine the mobile unit's location. The "Access points" that are stationary and are utilized to notify the service provider of the presence of the mobile user at the Access Point. The physical location of each the Access Points is known and thus provides the location of the mobile user by detecting the presence of the mobile user nearby through the communication link. The Stewart reference discloses providing information to the mobile user according to the location of the mobile unit at a particular Access Point.

Stewart, in contrast to the Applicant's invention, does not determine the location of the mobile unit (subscriber) using a location system such as a Mobile Positioning Center or GPS. By using the MPC the location of the mobile unit is more precise and instead of limiting the service to Access Point locations, service may be provided to the user without regard to Access Points. Neither does Stewart disclose involving the Internet in the process, whereas the Applicant's invention utilizes the Internet for communication between the B2B engine and the service provider. Stewart however, does enable the user to access a service provider directly through an Access Point. In contrast, the Applicant's invention sends an inquiry to the B2B engine and the engine handles virtually everything after that. Stewart does not disclose a B2B engine utilizing an associated logic module in the B2B engine to automatically update stored information at the business member, such as estimated time of arrival, without further input from the mobile user, as in the Applicant's invention. The B2B engine and the logic module together automatically handle the updating (writing to the business database) of the reservations at the business without the need for further input from the mobile unit.

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The Delorme reference was cited for sending a confirmation to the business and displaying the information at the business. Delorme appears to disclose a travel planning system that provides maps and data regarding reservations. Delorme discloses a system for planning trips, which can include reservations, location information, ticket pricing, etc. The system includes a "Wireless Communication Unit" that a subscriber uses to plan trips and make arrangements "on the go". The Delorme reference uses the stored, accumulated history of the subscriber to the account to ease the planning and reservation processes for the subscriber.

What is unique to the Applicant's invention, and what is not suggested in the Delorme reference, is the ability of the B2B engine in conjunction with a connected business member module to automatically read and write to the restaurant database in real-time through an Internet connection without intervention by the subscriber or the business (restaurant member). Also unique to the Applicant's invention is the automatic real-time updating of the reservation at the business member. The Applicant's invention utilizes a mobile position center to provide a real-time location of the mobile unit and the B2B. In conjunction with the business module, automatically and without input from the subscriber member or the business member, the B2B causes real time reservation information updates to be written to the business member's database. Neither Stewart nor Delorme provides real-time information exchange with the business member by writing current information regarding the mobile unit to the restaurant's database. The Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of the rejection of claim 26. Claim 37 is analogous to claim 26 and contains similar limitations and the Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of the rejection of claim 37.

Regarding claims 27 and 40, the Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of these claims. Claims 27 and 40 depend from claims 26 and 37 respectively and contain the same novel limitations found in claims 27 and 40. The Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of the rejection of these claims.

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Regarding claims 28 and 4, the Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of these claims. In the Detailed Action, a correspondence is drawn between the claimed feature of accessing the reservation application at the restaurant to determine current (real-time) seating and the description of detecting the mobile unit near an Access Point at col. 3, lines 20-45 of Stewart. However, Applicant has reviewed this cited portion of Stewart and finds no reference to determining current available seating. Instead, the cited portion of the Stewart reference indicates detecting the presence of a mobile unit at an Access point and a particular service provider taking actions based on the location. The Applicant's invention removes the responsibility of most of the interaction with a service provider from the mobile unit (subscriber) by the restaurant module in the B2B engine automatically performing the steps in claims 28 and 40. This being the case the Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of the rejection of these claims

With regard to claims 28 and 41, the Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of these claims. Stewart is cited for comparing available seating and wait times at each restaurant in a determined list of restaurants and sending comparison results to the subscriber from the restaurant module. The Applicant has reviewed the cited passage and finds no reference to comparing wait times and sending the comparison results to the subscriber. Instead the cited portion of Stewart discloses sending a message, via the Access Point, to a service provider to do a job, set up a reservation, etc., to reduce waiting time when the subscriber arrives at the service provider. This being the case, the Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of the rejection of these claims.

Regarding claims 29-36 and 43-48, the Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of these claims. These claims depend from claims 26 and 37 respectively, either directly or indirectly and contain the same novel limitations found in claims 27 and 40. The Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of the rejection of these claims.

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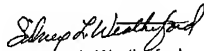
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CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, the Applicant believes all of the claims currently pending in the Application to be in a condition for allowance. The Applicant, therefore, respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw all rejections and issue a Notice of Allowance for all pending claims.

The Applicant requests a telephonic interview if the Examiner has any questions or requires any additional information that would further or expedite the prosecution of the Application.

Respectfully submitted,



By Sidney L. Weatherford
Registration No. 45,802

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Ericsson Inc.
6300 Legacy Drive, M/S EVR 1-C-11
Plano, Texas 75024

(972) 583-8656
sidney.weatherford@ericsson.com